

Frequently Asked Questions about Cancer of the Uterus

What is cancer of the uterus?

Cancer is a disease in which certain body cells don't function right, divide very fast, and produce too much tissue that forms a tumor. Cancer of the uterus is cancer in the womb, the hollow, pear-shaped organ where a baby grows during a woman's pregnancy. There are different types of uterine cancers. Two types are *endometrial cancer* and *uterine sarcomas*. In the United States, endometrial cancer is a common cancer of the female reproductive system. This type of cancer happens when cancer begins in the tissue lining the uterus (endometrium). Uterine sarcomas occur when cancer grows in the muscles or other supporting tissues in the uterus. Uterine sarcomas account for only a small portion of cancers of the uterus.

Why should I be concerned about cancer of the uterus?

Some women who get uterine cancer have certain risk factors, or things in their life that cause them to have a higher chance of getting this disease. But there are women who get uterine cancer who do not have any of these high risk factors. Uterine cancer usually occurs after menopause. But it may also occur around the time that menopause begins. Abnormal vaginal bleeding is the most common symptom of uterine cancer. Bleeding may start as a watery, blood-streaked flow that gradually contains more blood. Women should not assume that abnormal vaginal bleeding is part of menopause. If you have abnormal vaginal bleeding after menopause, talk with your health care provider.

Where can I learn more about cancer of the uterus?

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the federal government's authority on uterine cancer. Contact them at 800-4-CANCER (800-422-6237) or go to the following web site:
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinfo/wyntk/uterus>.

The National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC)

A Project of the Office on Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

For more information...

You can also find out more about cancer of the uterus by contacting the National Women's Health Information Center (800-994-9662) or the following organizations:

National Cancer Institute Cancer Information Service

Phone: (800) 422-6237

Internet Address: <http://cis.nci.nih.gov/>

Gynecologic Cancer Foundation

Phone: (800) 444-4441

Internet Address: <http://www.wcn.org/gcf>

American Cancer Society

Phone: (800)-ACS-2345

Internet Address: <http://www.cancer.org>

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